

Q. It doesn't have to be that short an answer. [Laughter]

The President. Well, first of all, it's different in different places, but let me say on balance I think it's been remarkably fair and thorough. The only frustrations that I feel since I've been President relate far more to what I would call almost the commercial imperatives that are on the press that have nothing to do with anybody trying to be unfair in their coverage. If I might, let me just give you one example.

I saw a survey recently that was reported somewhere, I'm embarrassed I don't remember where. They were asking the American people, this survey, is the President spending enough time on the economy, is the President spending enough time on health care, and a bunch of other questions. Only half the people said I was spending enough time on the economy even though that's what I spend all my time on. By two to one the people said I was spending enough time on health care. Why is that? Because the effort of the health care task force, chaired by my wife, to come up with a health care program is the subject of intense speculation because it hasn't been presented yet. So, given the propensity of people in Washington to leak, there's a new story every day about some little paper or another that's come out and all that. And then they have these public hearings, so there's a lot of anticipation.

The economic program was announced one month into my Presidency, and then I went to work on it in Congress. And what really is news is sort of around the edges; is he losing this or winning that or whatever. It becomes a process debate, and the American people tend to lose sight of what is the major focus of my every day, which is how to pass that jobs program and the economic program. That is simply a function of the way the news works.

The other thing I think is different about the news today than maybe 20 years ago, particularly for the coverage around Washington, is this: Because of CNN and others who now give virtually continuous direct access to the facts of whatever is going on to wide numbers of people, there is even more pressure than there used to be on everybody in the media to find an angle to the story, a

unique angle, an insight, you know, a twist. And sometimes that's good, and sometimes it's not. But it always presents a different challenge to me than perhaps the President might have had 20 years ago in trying to keep the focus of the public on the big issues that I'm trying to deal with.

But I say that not as a criticism but simply as an observation. That is simply the way things are. On balance we're better off. People are getting more information more quickly than ever before, but it's changed the dynamics of how we relate to each other.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. in Dahlgren Hall at the U.S. Naval Academy. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at the Conclusion of the Forest Conference in Portland, OR *April 2, 1993*

I want to thank all of you for being here and for sitting through this long day, and all of the participants for everything you've done. I'd like to thank the Cabinet for coming and participating and the Vice President and our staff for all the work they did to put this meeting together.

One of the things that has come out of this meeting to me loud and clear is that you want us to try to break the paralysis that presently controls the situation, to move and to act. I hope that as we leave here we are more committed to working together to move forward than perhaps we were when we came.

I tell you, I'll never forget what I've heard today, the stories, the pictures, the passion from all of you. In a funny way, even when you were disagreeing, every one of you was a voice for change. Every one of you was saying we can't possibly do any worse than to stay within the framework which has now undermined our ability to work together and to build a sense of common community. Too many people are being hurt, and too many resources are being threatened. And we're going to do our best to turn this away from

at least the short-term politics of just trying to avoid the tough decisions.

I intend to direct the Cabinet and the entire administration to begin work immediately to craft a balanced, a comprehensive, a long-term policy. And I will direct the Cabinet to report back to me within 60 days to have a plan to end this stalemate.

In the meanwhile, I want each of our Cabinet to look within the Departments to determine which policies are at odds with each other. It is true, as I've said many times, that I was mortified when I began to review the legal documents surrounding this controversy to see how often the Departments were at odds with each other, so that there was no voice of the United States. I want the Cabinet members to talk with each other to try to bring these conflicts to an end, which at their extreme have had our own Agencies suing one another in courts, often over issues which are hard to characterize as monumental. I want everyone to examine his or her approach to existing legal and administrative proceedings to see if inadvertently any of us are hampering the march toward a solution of the larger issues or even toward the particular ones now in litigation.

Regardless of what we are doing, our efforts must be guided, it seems to me, by five fundamental principles: First, we must never forget the human and the economic dimensions of these problems. Where sound management policies can preserve the health of forest lands, sales should go forward. Where this requirement cannot be met, we need to do our best to offer new economic opportunities for year-round, high-wage, high-skill jobs.

Second, as we craft a plan, we need to protect the long-term health of our forests, our wildlife, and our waterways. They are, as the last speaker said, a gift from God, and we hold them in trust for future generations.

Third, our efforts must be, insofar as we are wise enough to know it, scientifically sound, ecologically credible, and legally responsible.

Fourth, the plan should produce a predictable and sustainable level of timber sales and non-timber resources that will not degrade or destroy our forest environment.

And, fifth, to achieve these goals, we will do our best, as I said, to make the Federal Government work together and work for you. We may make mistakes, but we will try to end the gridlock within the Federal Government. And we will insist on collaboration, not confrontation. We will do our best to do our part. We will act with a single purpose and a single agenda once we have a chance to get all these Departments working on their respective responsibilities.

But I want to say, too, that all of you have demonstrated to me today your willingness to do your part. I ask you not to let this be the end of it. This conference has established a dialog. Even when it was somewhat funny between Mr. Kerr and Miss Mater, it was still a dialog. And it's got to continue between us and you, and among yourselves. You have got to be a part of this solution. Even if we make the most enlightened possible decisions under the circumstances, they will be all the more resented if they seem to be imposed, without a continuing mechanism for people whose lives will be affected here to be involved.

So when you leave here today, I ask you to keep working for a balanced policy that promotes the economy, preserves jobs, and protects the environment even as you may disagree, as Mr. Thomas said, over how the word "balance" should be defined. When you hit an impasse, I plead with you not to give up. And don't turn against your neighbors. You don't have to fight in a court of law anymore. You can work with us to try to have a long-term solution. If you feel frustrated at times—all of us will—I ask you to stay at the table and to keep talking and keep trying to find common ground. I don't want this situation to go back to posturing, to positioning, to the politics of division that has characterized this difficult issue in the past. I hope we can stay in the conference room and stay out of the courtroom. If we don't give up or give in to deadlock or divisiveness or despair, I think we can build a more prosperous and a more secure future for our communities and for our children. And I think we'll be proud years from now that we were here today.

I thank you for caring and for coming, for speaking out and for reaching out. And I ask

you to continue to work with us so that this Forest Conference is the beginning, not the end, of a solution. But we will move. We will move. And I will do my best to assume the responsibility the American people have given me to try to break this deadlock in a responsible way. I just ask you to remember that this listening cannot be a one-shot deal. We've got to continue to work together. And I think, if we do, we'll all be pleased with the results.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:10 p.m. at the Oregon Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Andy Kerr, conservation director, Oregon Natural Resources Council. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Radio Address on the Economy and the Russia-United States Summit

April 3, 1993

Good morning. There's much wisdom in these words from the Scriptures, "Come, let us reason together." This week we've seen a good example of what happens when people talk to each other instead of shout at each other. And unfortunately, we've also seen what happens when some people go to unreasonable lengths to prevent reasonable discussion and decisionmaking.

I'm speaking to you from the Pacific Northwest where we've just concluded the Forest Conference. For years, the good people of the Northwest have been divided by a difficult argument over important values: how best to preserve jobs and protect the forests in this beautiful and productive region of our great Nation.

Yesterday, in Portland, Oregon, timber workers, business people, environmentalists, and community leaders sat down together in a conference room, not a courtroom. We discussed how to achieve a healthy economy and a healthy environment. And I directed my Cabinet to come back within 60 days with a plan for a balanced policy.

Grassroots Americans want to end the gridlock and get the economy moving. They want to follow the same practice that we followed in Oregon yesterday. Unfortunately,

some people in Washington, DC, haven't gotten the message that the people want fundamental change. Yesterday the minority party in the Senate used procedural tactics to prevent the entire Senate from voting on our jobs and economic recovery package, which has already been passed overwhelmingly by the House of Representatives.

Yesterday we also learned why our jobs package is even more urgent than ever. After 3 years, when America lost one million jobs in the private sector, the unemployment rate remained unchanged in March, and the total number of jobs in our economy actually declined. Now, some folks in Washington may think everything is fine, but all across America the people understand there won't be a real recovery until our working men and women can look forward to a secure, high-wage future for themselves and their children. The people know that America needs our plan to put 500,000 Americans back to work by beginning the investments we need in a stronger, smarter economy.

It's time to move beyond the old politics of partisanship, posturing, and procedural delays and start working together to solve problems. Good things can be accomplished when we reason together. And just as this works in our own country, so too can it work between ourselves and other nations.

That's why I'm taking my first trip out of the country today to meet with Russia's democratically elected President, Boris Yeltsin. Nowhere is progress toward democracy and free markets more important to us than in Russia and the new independent states of the former Soviet Union. Their progress presents a great security challenge and offers great economic opportunities. Russia's rebirth is in the economic interests of American taxpayers, workers, and businesses and the security interests of all of us.

We spent over \$4 trillion to wage the cold war. Now we can reduce that spending because the arms and armies of the former Soviet Union pose a greatly reduced threat to us and to our allies. If Russia were to revert to its old ways or plunge into chaos, we would need to reassess our plans for defense savings. That could mean less money for creating new businesses and new jobs, less for pre-